

On January 21, 2008 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day), the Michigan Secretary of State announced that starting Tuesday, January 22, 2008, first-time applicants for Michigan driver's licenses will have to provide proof that they are U.S. citizens or Lawful Permanent Residents. All other immigrants, including those here legally on work visas or any other type of legal status, as well as those immigrants without lawful immigration status, will not be eligible for new Michigan driver's licenses.

The press release states that updated procedures for renewal licenses will be released soon.

Here is a link to the Press Release:

<http://michigan.gov/sos/0,1607,7-127--183894--,00.html>

Here is a link to a new summary of the requirements for a new Michigan driver's license:

[http://michigan.gov/documents/sos/Applying\\_for\\_lic\\_or\\_ID\\_SOS\\_428\\_222146\\_7.pdf](http://michigan.gov/documents/sos/Applying_for_lic_or_ID_SOS_428_222146_7.pdf)

The documents listed in column two of the above summary have the significance of limited new driver's licenses to only U.S. citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents ("green-card holders") who are able to present proof of their status. U.S. citizens will have to present one of the following: original certified copy of their birth certificate, a valid unexpired U.S. passport, a Certificate of Citizenship, a Certificate of Naturalization, or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad. Lawful Permanent Residents will have to present a valid unexpired Permanent Resident card ("green card") that was issued after December 1997. Strangely, this means that Lawful Permanent Residents who possess valid green cards that were issued before that date, and that have not expired, will be unable to qualify for a Michigan driver's license. In addition, Lawful Permanent Residents who are waiting for the federal government to process their applications to renew their green cards will also not qualify under the stated policy.

The above summary also indicates that the Secretary of State will require that applicants present a certain document containing their social security number, rather than the previous practice of applicants writing down their number. Acceptable documents include a social security card, a W-2, a 1099, a paystub with name and social security number, or a letter of ineligibility from the Social Security Administration that is no more than 30 days old. All social security number information will be verified.

The Department is applying the same procedures to state ID cards, as you'll see in the links mentioned above. The Attorney General opinion did not apply to state ID cards - it specifically says that it applies only to driver's licenses since the state statutes he analyzed dealt only with driver's licenses - so it is unclear where the Secretary of State is getting the authority to change the requirements for applying for a state ID card.